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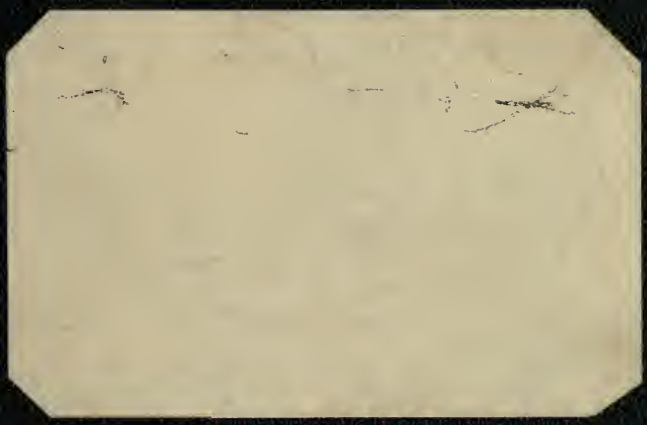

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MEMOIR

OF

JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN.

366

TO THE CITY OF CHARLESTON,

WHICH HAS RECENTLY EXHIBITED A MAGNIFICENT AND IMPRESSIVE FUNERAL PAGEANT, IN HONOR OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD,

THIS MEMOIR IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

(WITH A PORTRAIT.)

"Finis vitæ ejus nobis luctuosus, amicis tristis, extraneis etiam ignotisque non sine curâ fuit."

[FROM THE AMERICAN WHIG REVIEW, AUGUST, 1850.]

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY D. W. HOLLY, AMERICAN WHIG REVIEW OFFICE,

118 Nassau Street.

PROSPECTUS

OF

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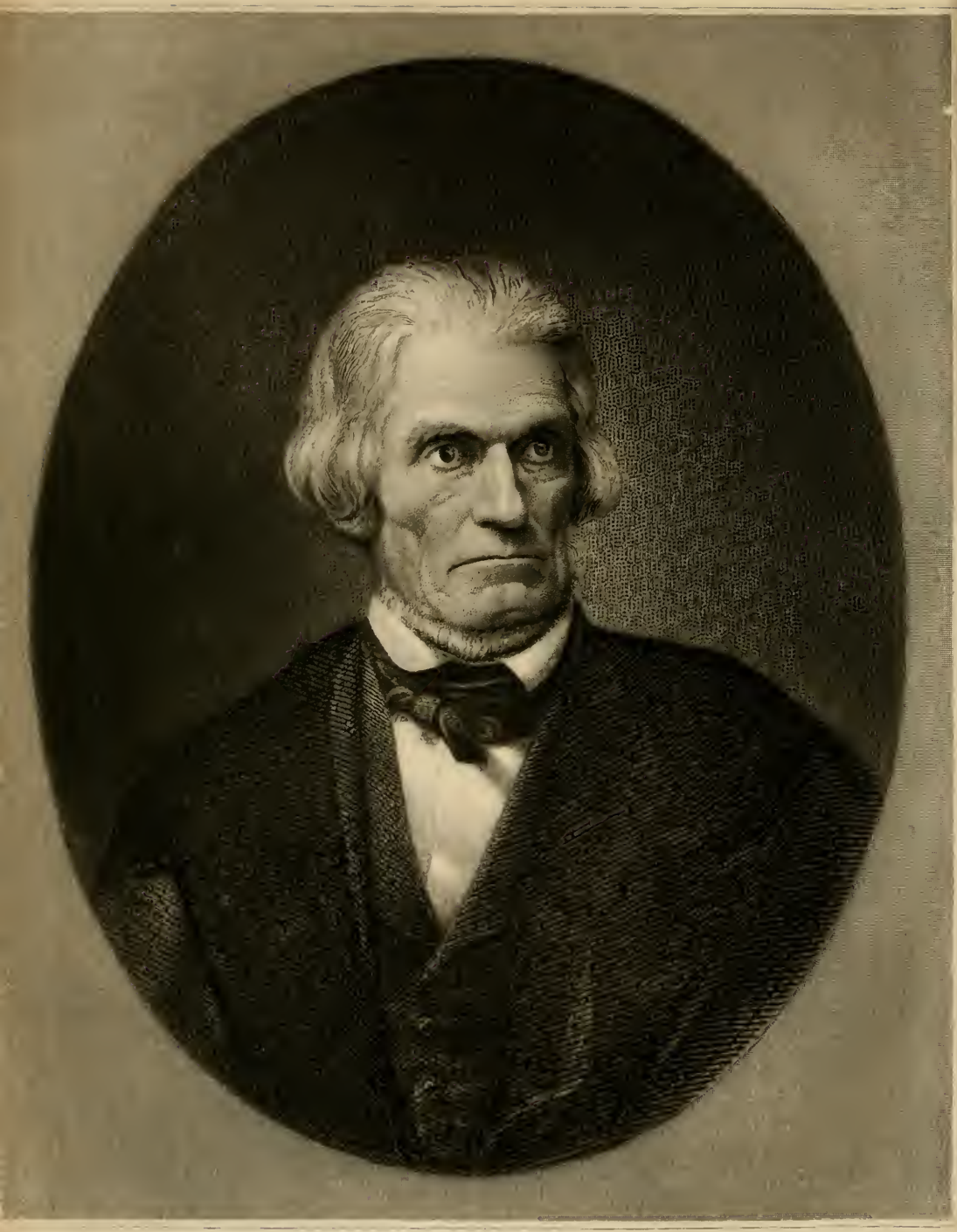

J. C. Calhoun

MEMOIR

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1850

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JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN.

To the City of Charleston, which has recently exhibited a magnificent and impressive funeral pageant, in honor of the illustrious dead, this Memoir is respectfully dedicated.

MEMOIR.

The death of this illustrious citizen, long identified with the public service, and mourned with a depth of sorrow more general, more solemn, and more impressive, than has ever distinguished any statesman since the decease of Washington, renders the tribute of praise, at once an appropriate and first duty. The deference which men of all classes pay to great abilities and incorruptible integrity, is a tribute due to a sense of the immortality of the soul and to the eminent superiority of virtue. When a life is found to be full of exhibitions of an exalted mind, and of devotion to principles of honor and morality, men, irrespective of mere difference of opinion, award it, involuntarily, the highest homage of their good opinion. Envy itself, which always accompanies the steps of the good man, and detracts from his fame and misconstrues his motives, worn out in the contest, perishes on his grave: and contemporaries, who are ever distrustful of success, and invidious in concessions to merit, are the first to hang willows over the bier of one, no longer capable of exciting jealousy, or of triumphing in the race of life.

It has been remarked, not unfrequently, with less of surprise than of disparagement, that Mr. Calhoun had a hold on the affections of the people of South Carolina, unequalled in the history of public men. This veneration for his person and opinions, has often been attributed to the predominence of a popular leader over the dependent, yielding mind of the public. This supposition is untrue. If asked to state the reason, which more than any other, caused the extraordinary popularity of this statesman, we would say, it was his stainless honor and incorruptible good faith. Out of these virtues, incomparable as they were, grew his self denial, amidst the promptings of ambition; his firmness in the cause of right!

We will not say that, in every instance, Mr. Calhoun saw the future with a perfectly true glance; or that the objects at which he looked, invariably sent back into his orb of vision, a reflection entirely correct, not sometimes broken by the media intervening—not occasionally obscured by rather hastily formed conjectures—But this we believe—He ever looked at things with honest intent—with an anxious wish to ascertain the truth, and to avoid evil; and he both honestly and boldly spoke out what he conceived of the mischiefs or advantages presented to his mind.

Mr. Calhoun was not ambitious in the sense in which that term has been used with reference to his motives and acts. He was desirous, ardently desirous, of being known as the advocate of the solid truths of politics. For the vanities of the position of a statesman he never longed; and, therefore, to obtain them, never conciliated or bargained. He fixed his mind on justice, on principle, on the essence of the mutual obligations arising between governments and the people; and to assert these he poured forth from the copious fountains of his intellect and his heart, the most brilliant offerings, and most profound devotion. We are confident that for station and dignity, independently of the right and glory of the means by which attained, he cared nothing. "Sir," said he to the writer, while in Charleston, on the last journey he made to Washington, "The Presidency has not been in my thoughts for ten years. I would not take public office at the sacrifice of what is due to my own independence, or to my own opinions, still less by waving the most immaterial right to which my fellow-countrymen are entitled." Mr. Calhoun's whole life attests the sincerity and truth of this declaration. Like the great Halifax, so powerfully described by Macaulay, his public career shows the prominent fact, that, if ever he did vary his opinions, the change was never from the weaker to the stronger side. Public sentiment may, as is often said, be a fair indication of what is proper to be done in a majority of instances; but it is not always right; and certainly he who withstands it, if he furnishes no evidence of his superiority in judgment, gives incontestable proof of his candor and firmness. From the mass of politicians delineated by history, posterity delights to distinguish those, who amidst great imputed defects of character, and many errors of mind, have still preserved their sentiments inviolate—who, though mingled with all the slanders of the times in which they lived; and, notwithstanding, the temptations of place; the corruptions of party, and the persecutions of opponents, have nobly maintained the truth, and resolutely spoken for the right. On the contrary, however successful they may have been for the period of elevation, and during the exercise of the power of patronage, mankind with one accord, the impious seductions of the age removed, condemn the dishonorable acts of the Machiavels and Woolseys of every time and country. The world is constantly deploring, and yet, while the thing is passing before it, constantly sustaining, the weaknesses and illusions of politics. Every revolution is based on a necessity for checking the corruptions of the dynasty preceding; and yet, the succession falls into the debaucheries of the power existing before. A mild and virtuous leader, raised up for the occasion, possessed of faculties to command the public voice and concentrate its suffrage, scarcely finds himself successful, before he discovers that he must be unjust. All that is violent in partizanship must succeed to whatever is sacred in principle; ability and honesty must be sacrificed to expediency, and the fortunate politician must practice guilt as if it were public virtue, and condemn integrity as if it were depravity. The country in which we live presents, it is true, exceptions; but such have never been successful politicians. Public honors have fled from the statesman most worthy to wear them, and swelled the triumphs of those who have been dissolute in their public lives.

When we assert that Mr. Calhoun was not one of this latter class, we intend to raise no issue whatever with respect to the correctness of his views, considered as mere abstract political sentiment. Such a course would not only be disrespectful to those generous men who have entertained

opposite opinions, and who have opened bosoms, long mailed in the armour of vigorous conflicts, and poured out from them magnanimous streams of eulogium and eloquence; but would be unsuited to the solemnity of the occasion of this memoir. As the evil he has done, if any, must be buried with him, so should all recollection of the violent controversies of his day be alike consigned to the tomb. The storms and agitations of the various political questions in which he engaged, have, we hope, passed away; and friends and enemies alike sorrowing—alike relieved of prejudices and disarmed of resentments, amidst the de-departing rays of the sun of his last day, may stand in harmony around his grave, and multiply the records of his memorable devotion to the public service.

We do not intend to seek out for approbation or condemnation, any of those leading topics which, during Mr. Calhoun's public life, produced so much controversy, and in respect to which the people of the United States have been so divided. We seek to give a history of, rather than a criticism on, Mr. Calhoun's participation in public events. We will not hold a scale by which to determine his consistency or his fluctuations, if guilty of any. The Tariff, the Bank of the United States, State Rights—on all of these, whatever his views, they were invariably entertained in good faith and frankly expressed. His most inveterate enemy, and who has not such, however pure! will admit this. In political fame, it is not the character of the man's opinions which is to be considered; it is the honesty, the truthfulness of his conceptions and of his advocacy of them. We may not dwell too minutely on the nature of a measure proposed. The human mind is forced to view things through such various media, that we may well distrust its judgment. We are compelled as often to blush at following precedents, as at condemning sentiments. But, on questions involving clear principles, we may generally express ourselves without reserve. In measures embracing interests and holding in issue the highest obligations, moral and political, we can decide without inflicting pain or exciting animosities. Of this nature shall be the incidents of Mr. Calhoun's life, on which we shall hazard approbatory reflections.

The circumstance which first brought Mr. Calhoun's name before the country, was an Address and Resolutions made to the people of Abbeville District, South Carolina, on the occasion of the attack on the Chesapeake by the Leopard. That brutal violation of the laws of nations and of humanity kindled a flame in every part of the Union. His speech in support of war was a fearless exposition of the privileges of American seamen, and an indignant denunciation of the cowardly attack which had violated them. It placed him at once so high in public confidence that he was soon after voted into the State Legislature. There his brief service was distinguished by a masterly defence and sagacious arrangement of the affairs of the Republican party. He reviewed the prospects of the country, and predicted the difficulties in which Europe and the United States would soon be involved. He denounced the restrictive system proposed for the redress of our grievances, and pointed to a war with England as both expedient and inevitable. In order to prevent distraction in the Republican party, he proposed the name of Mr. John Langdon, of New Hampshire, for the Vice-Presidency, under Mr. Madison.

In 1810, Mr. Calhoun took his seat in the House of Representatives of the United States. The period was pregnant with portentous prospects. War raged over Europe. The Berlin and Milan decrees of France, and the British orders of council had divided the commerce of the world be-

tween these nations. The policy, so earnestly pressed on the consideration of the people of the Union, of Peace and Non-Interference, it was not possible for the government to pursue, without abandoning every right dear to the citizen, and forfeiting every claim to the respect of foreign states. The navy of Great Britain swept the ocean. Flushed with victories, and arrogant under the acknowledged title of mistress of the seas, she boldly boarded our vessels, and manned her ships from our crews. Apprehensions that our trade and commerce would sink under resistance, paralyzed for a time the resolution of our people. Embargoes and non-importation acts were the favorite measures of resistance. At this juncture, Mr. Calhoun entered the arena. He took a prominent part in the efforts to enforce the necessity of immediate preparations for war. The defence of a Report from the Committee on Foreign Relations devolved on him. He met John Randolph, and Philip Barton Key, in the discussion, and placed the question of the propriety of war beyond controversy. His speech wrung laudatory approval from the cautious and capable Mr. Ritchie. He was compared to Hercules with his club; he was likened in his moral sentiments to Fox; and when South Carolina was congratulated, it was said that Virginia, full as she was of glorious intellect, was not so rich but that she might wish him her son The following extract from Mr. Calhoun's speech on the occasion is valuable, as disclosing striking truths, clothed in apt phrase :—

"We are next told of the expenses of the war, and that the people will not pay taxes. Why not? Is it a want of means? What, with 1,000,000 tons of shipping; a commerce of $100,000,000 annually; manufactures yielding a yearly profit of $150,000,000, and agriculture thrice that amount; shall we, with such great resources, be told that the country wants ability to raise and support 10,000 or 15,000 additional regulars? No: it has the ability, that is admitted; but will it not have the disposition? Is not our course just and necessary? Shall we, then, utter this libel on the people? Where will proof be found of a fact so disgraceful? It is said, in the history of the country twelve or fifteen years ago. The case is not parallel. The ability of the country is greatly increased since. The whiskey tax was unpopular. But, as well as my memory serves me, the objection was not so much to the tax or its amount as the mode of collecting it. The people were startled by the host of officers, and their love of liberty shocked with the multiplicity of regulations. We, in the spirit of imitation, copied from the most oppressive part of the European laws on the subject of taxes, and imposed on a young and virtuous people the severe provisions made necessary by corruption and the long practice of evasion. If taxes should become necessary, I do not hesitate to say the people will pay cheerfully. It is for their government and their cause, and it would be their interest and duty to pay. But it may be, and I believe was said, that the people will not pay taxes, because the rights violated are not worth defending, or that the defence will cost more than the gain. Sir, I here enter my solemn protest against this low and 'calculating avarice' entering this hall of legislation. It is only fit for shops and counting-houses, and ought not to disgrace the seat of power by its squalid aspect. Whenever it touches sovereign power, the nation is ruined. It is too short-sighted to defend itself. It is a compromising spirit, always ready to yield a part to save the residue. It is too timid to have in itself the laws of self-preservation. It is never safe but under the shield of honor. There is, sir, one principle necessary to make us a great people---to produce, not the form, but real spirit of union, and that is to protect every citizen in the lawful pursuit of his business. He will then feel that he is backed by the government, that its arm is his arm. He then will rejoice in its increased strength and prosperity. Protection and patriotism are reciprocal. This is the way which has led nations to greatness. Sir, I am not versed in this calculating policy, and will not, therefore, pretend to estimate in dollars and cents the value of national independence. I cannot measure in shillings and pence the misery, the stripes, and the slavery of our impressed seamen; nor even the value of our shipping, commercial, and agricultural losses, under the orders in council and the British system of blockade. In thus expressing myself, I do not intend to condemn any prudent estimate of the means of a country before it enters on a war. That is wisdom, the other folly. The gentleman from Virginia has not failed to touch on the calamity of war, that fruitful source of declamation, by which humanity is made the

advocate of submission. If he desires to repress the gallant ardor of our countrymen by such topics, let me inform him that true courage regards only the cause; that it is just and necessary, and that it contemns the sufferings and dangers of war. If he really wishes well to the cause of humanity, let his eloquence be addressed to the British ministry, and not the American Congress. Tell them that, if they persist in such daring insult and outrages to a neutral nation, however inclined to peace, it will be bound by honor and safety to resist; that their patience and endurance, however great, will be exhausted; that the calamity of war will ensue, and that they, and not we, in the opinion of the world, will be answerable for all its devastation and misery. Let a regard to the interest of humanity stay the hand of injustice, and my life on it, the gentleman will not find it difficult to dissuade his countrymen from rushing into the bloody scenes of war."

Though the first tones of Mr. Calhoun's voice, in public life, were for war, yet they were justified, we humbly believe, in the eyes of the truest advocate of peace. They were spoken to rouse the country to a declaration of hostilities, for frightful outrages on humanity. The people of the United States have no resentment to indulge, no revenge to gratify. The judgment of Providence has given them the guardianship of that religion and those laws which have so often been the boast and admiration of England herself. Our government is a trustee for those rights, not for itself, not for our citizens alone; but for all nations, and for all objects dear to civilization and to man. War is the instrument of God, to punish nations. Communities, as such, cannot be avenged in their individuals, for crimes of their rulers. The crimes which might condemn the government, may exempt the citizen; and if war were not a means in the power of Heaven, the flame of public liberty might be extinguished, and the wrongs of men, as nations, remain forever unredressed. Inexorable tyrants might, with impunity, overrun the peaceful territories of freedom, and millions of suffering human beings be subjected to the most severe political oppressions. When the United States made war on England, these principles were at stake. Had our Government failed to vindicate the aggressions perpetrated, the injuries inflicted on us would have become perpetual exercises of power over the whole civilized world. The United States, in losing her sense of right, would have lost the respect of the world. What we cease to respect, we cease to fear. The nation, now the asylum of the oppressed of all the earth, the centre of free commerce, and the locality of the altars of unrestrained religion, would have been, if not a feeble colony of Great Britain, at all events a miserable and weak Republic. Mr. Calhoun saw the consequences, and did not hesitate to give his powers to the justification of the principles involved. He sent forth, in trumpet tones, appeals which animated the patriotism of the American people, and stirred up the slumbering energies of a previous revolution. He dissipated the selfish views and doubting policy of the few who considered, or were alarmed by the probable results of a war with that powerful country; and substituted, for these thoughts, a patriotic regard for the honor, the rights, and glory of the Republic. In the crisis, he not only bore away victory from all his opponents, but achieved a triumph over himself, the greatest of all conquests. Had Mr. Calhoun been a mere time-serving politician, had his soul been capable of a selfish thought, now was the time for ascendancy. Full as he was of honors, crowded at every step with evidences of the approbation of the public, he might have secured any place in the gift of the people. But he had no self love inconsistent with the purity and integrity of his motives; and, having accomplished the high end for which he had labored, he looked about to see where his country might be next attacked. He saw the weak

point in our internal arrangements. He saw a proclivity in the general government to concentrate power, at the expense of the authority of the States: and, from that time to the moment of his death, this danger absorbed his thoughts, and directed his course. It was in vain that men looked, and turned away contemptuously, because they did not see what he did. With eyes fixed on the future, he turned neither to the right nor the left. He pointed to the dim speck on the horizon, and foretold the coming storm. It was the sole image on his mind's eye. He anticipated terrible calamities; and, to avert them, determined on new, bold, and to many men, alarming preventives. He left the ranks of a well organized, prosperous and conquering party; a party, on whose eagles victory seemed to have perched with strength all powerful, to take an isolated position, where all said he was fighting with a phantom. He made all the sacrifices which are thought dear to the human breast. He forebore the pomp and advantage of a majority, to array himself, with little hope of success, or promise of reward, in the ranks of a small and unpopular minority. May we not, without either approving or condemning the opinions of this great man, yet give him the just award of possessing a resolute, a conscientious soul? One which justified right, and contested for truth, in the midst of every disadvantage, and upheld what seemed the right amid the severest opposition?

At the same session in which he defended the war, Mr. Calhoun, against the preconceived opinions of the body of the Republicans, gave his enthusiastic support to measures for the increase of the Navy. To him, to Mr. Lowndes, Mr. Cheves and Mr. Clay, are due all praise for fostering, in its infancy, a branch of the national defence, which has won immortal glory for the American name.

On the retirement of Mr. Portor from the position of Chairman on the Committee on Foreign Relations, the duties of that committee, all exceedingly arduous, fell on Mr. Calhoun. He discharged them with an *ability* and *industry* which elicited universal approval.

At the session of Congress ensuing, Mr. Calhoun rendered a signal service to the commercial interests of the country. A forfeiture of millions of the capital of the country, vested abroad, and under the shape of merchandize, imported into the country, to avoid loss under the non-importation act, had been prayed to be remitted. This the Secretary of the Treasury had recommended to be done, on the condition that the amount were loaned to the government. Mr. Calhoun, with characteristic honesty, supported the prayer of the petition, but denounced the condition. His efforts relieved our merchants of this onerous penalty.

The advocacy of the Loan Bill as rendered necessary by the exigencies of the war, gave Mr. Calhoun an opportunity for new displays of eloquence and reasoning. His speech, on that occasion, is a brilliant effort; the power and effect of which, in rousing the mind to a just conception of the duty of sustaining the war, transcended the immediate occasion of its delivery.

On the great question of a Bank of the United States, in 1814, a measure of the Administration, Mr. Calhoun differed from his party. He opposed the bill which sought to carry out this measure, and rejected various propositions of his friends to adapt its provisions to his views.

It would be profitless, perhaps invidious, to survey the particulars of the contest on the Tariff of 1816. A denial of the charge that it was the origin of the Protective system, or the assertion that Mr. Calhoun's opinions, respecting it, have been misrepresented, would awaken sleeping

feuds, in which party predilections would be substituted for arguments. While, on the one hand, Mr. Calhoun is said to be the author of the system, it is, on the other, asserted that circumstances connected with our foreign relations, and not the idea of home protection, justified the support he gave the measure. Both positions have able and honest advocates. Both are, however, under the influence of long favored attachments. These sensibly affect the judgment; and like prejudices, growing up with infancy, and long cherished in manhood, are not easily dissipated, even by the rays of reason.

Of the like character is the dispute on Mr. Calhoun's position with respect to setting apart the bonus of the United States Bank, for Internal Improvement. Mr. Calhoun is no longer here to defend his consistency, or to furnish the explanations so necessary to enable men to arrive at truth. Enemies and friends alike err—the former in making too little, the latter too much allowance. Let the contrast, so far as his memory is concerned, be withdrawn. The gallant Saladin, and the chivalrous Richard of the lion's heart, did not think it unworthy of their magnanimity or courage to decline a combat long maintained without success to either.

The conduct of the war department as Secretary under Mr. Monroe, gave Mr. Calhoun a very high character for close investigation and high administrative talent. The confused and long unsettled accounts of that office engaged his attention, with unremitted industry, for seven years. From an office difficult of management, it became one of ease for his successors. He reformed it in many particulars, cleared its affairs of all embarrassments, and literally brought order out of chaos.

In the contest for the Presidency, in which Mr. Adams, General Jackson, Mr. Crawford, and Mr. Clay were the rival candidates, Mr. Calhoun, with rare self-denial having withdrawn from the field, had the justice awarded him of being placed on nearly all the tickets for the Vice-Presidency. Having been elected to this office, he took his seat as President of the Senate in 1825, and, by the exercise of much dignity and firmness, brought the position into very great distinction. It was characteristic of Mr. Calhoun, that in all his public acts, he leaned against power. This was never more prominently displayed than in his decision of an important point arising in the debate on the celebrated Panama mission. Mr. Randolph had made on this question a most scathing attack on the administration. In reference to it, Mr. Calhoun, as presiding officer of the Senate, decided that he had no power to restrain a Senator in respect to words spoken in debate. Out of that decision arose a controversy engaging all the powers and prejudices of friends and opponents of the administration No one ever doubted Mr. Calhoun's honesty of purpose in this decision, or the superiority of his defence, under the signature of "Onslow."

Mingling in the conflicts arising on the Tariff of 1828, and in connection with the efforts to defeat Mr. Adams on a second election, Mr. Calhoun was placed in a position to display, in strong light, his extraordinary resistance to party ties in the performance of duty. The contest in respect to the Tariff had nearly equally divided the Senate. To avoid the consequences of a tie vote, Mr. Calhoun, who was on the ticket with General Jackson for the Vice-Presidency, was advised to withdraw from his seat. He indignantly refused—determined, as he declared, to risk all hope of advancement for himself, rather than shrink from his duty. In order to avoid, however, the possibility of injuring the prospects of General Jackson, he declared his willingness to take his name from the ticket.

We pass over various particulars in the history of Mr. Calhoun's distinguished services in the Cabinet of Mr. Monroe, in the Vice-Presidency and in the Senate, all exhibiting the superiority of his judgment and the sincerity of his attachment to the Constitution and the Union. We will pause to consider that period, when, having done so much to elevate General Jackson, he was treacherously superseded in his confidence. We will not examine into the causes of that event — we will not gather up the nearly extinguished sparks from the ashes of that disgraceful and scandalous quarrel, in which the only decency and moderation were displayed by its victim.

Two acts of Mr. Calhoun in the sessions of 1814, 1815, and 1816, have been the subject of frequent animadversion and defence. It will be understood we refer to the bill reported by him to set apart and pledge the bonus of the United States Bank, as a fund for Internal Improvement, and his assent to the policy of the Bank, recommended by Mr. Madison. It is enough to say here, in regard to these measures, that, with respect to the first, Mr. Calhoun, as we understand, has never denied that it was his early impression that the constitutional power of Congress over Internal Improvement was comprehended under the money power. The error, as he believed, of this view, was soon developed, and the promptest confession of it made. In reference to the Bank, Mr. Calhoun has ever insisted that he yielded to the necessity for its establishment, in view of the peculiar position of the country and its finances at the time, and not of its general policy or constitutionality.

We come to the exciting topic of State Interposition. Out of the opposition of the South to the Tariff of 1828, this doctrine began to be developed. From the long fallow ground of the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions the seeds of this principle were gathered, and scattered in a new soil. They grew and flourished luxuriantly in the South, and received the early and warm encouragement of Mr. Calhoun. The "South Carolina Exposition and Protest on the Tariff," adopted by the Legislature of that State, was understood to have been proposed by Mr. Calhoun. The following extract from a document by Mr. Calhoun, embraces the leading features of this doctrine:—

"The great and leading principle is, that the General Government emanated from the several states, forming distinct political communities, and acting in their separate and sovereign capacity, and not from all of the people forming one aggregate political community; that the Constitution of the United States is, in fact, a compact, to which each state is a party, in the character already described; and that the several states or parties have a right to judge of its infractions, and, in case of a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of power not delegated, they have the right, in the last resort, to use the language of the Virginia resolutions, '*to interpose for arresting the progress of the evil, and for maintaining, within their respective limits, the authorities, rights, and liberties, appertaining to them.*' This right of interposition, thus solemnly asserted by the State of Virginia, be it called what it may, state-right, veto, nullification, or by any other name, I conceive to be the fundamental principle of our system, resting on facts historically as certain as our Revolution itself, and deductions as simple and demonstrative as that of any political or moral truth whatever; and I firmly believe, that on its recognition depends the stability and safety of our political institutions.

"I am not ignorant that those opposed to the doctrine have always, now and formerly, regarded it in a very different light, as anarchical and revolutionary. Could I believe such, in fact, to be its tendency, to me it would be no recommendation. I yield to none, I trust, in a deep and sincere attachment to our political institutions, and the union of these states. I never breathed an opposite sentiment; but, on the contrary, I have ever considered them the great instrument of preserving our liberty, and promoting the happiness of ourselves and our posterity; and, next to these, I have ever held them most dear. Nearly half my life has passed in the service of the Union, and whatever public reputation I have acquired is indissolubly identified with it. To be too national, has, indeed, been con-

sidered by many, even of my friends, to be my greatest political fault. With these strong feelings of attachment, I have examined, with the utmost care, the bearing of the doctrine in question; and so far from anarchical or revolutionary, I solemnly believe it to be the only solid foundation of our system, and of the Union itself, and that the opposite doctrine, which denies to the states the right of protecting their several powers, and which would vest in the General Government (it matters not through what department) the right of determining, exclusively and finally, the powers delegated to it, is incompatible with the sovereignty of the states and of the Constitution itself, considered as the basis of a Federal Union. As strong as this language is, it is not stronger than that used by the illustrious Jefferson, who said, to give the General Government the final and exclusive right to judge of its powers, is to make '*its discretion*, and *not the Constitution, the measure of its powers*;' and that '*in all cases of compact between parties having no common judge for itself, as well of the infraction as of the mode and measure of redress*.' Language cannot be more explicit, nor can higher authority be adduced."

But how shall we treat this important period in Mr. Calhoun's life? How speak of his views, without giving offence? How shall we mention the arguments, and relate the incidents of Nullification, without awakening the prejudices and heart-burnings of the times? How shall we do justice to Mr. Calhoun's sentiments, without wronging the sentiments of others? The cause that produced this fearful controversy was removed. The quarrel which shook the faith of men in the stability of our government, was adjusted. Great God! bless the noble spirits who substituted peace for war! Immortal be the memory of the statesmen who looked beyond the animosities of a moment—who, in the midst of the excesses of the times, animated by holy emotions of patriotism, resolved, by honorable concession and compromise, to preserve and perpetuate the union of these States!

During the pendency of this question, the most momentous that ever agitated the country, Mr. Calhoun engaged into an intellectual conflict with Daniel Webster. Never had the world listened to finer exhibitions of mind. The rolling words of the great New Englander came like the swelling bosom of the great father of waters, exciting terrible apprehensions of danger to the Union. The keen logic, the clear conceptions of his opponent, filled the whole horizon with effulgence.

While the giants were contesting the field, victory now inclining to the one, now to the other, the issue uncertain—dreaded by all men, the great chieftian of compromises stepped into the arena, and threw up the weapons of the combatants. He, whose life was ever superior to the advantage of the moment. He, who revives, in our time, the most glorious conceptions of Cicero. He, who, when others strove for the triumphs of party, snatched from destiny the victories of conciliation; introduced his celebrated bill of Compromise, and dispelled the storm. Mr. Calhoun was not behind Henry Clay in magnanimity and love of country. If not the first to propose the compromise, he was the first to accept it. If, as most falsely charged, he was ambitious of a Southern Presidency, he would never have gone forth so readily to accept, on the part of the South, the proffered olive branch. He stood first in the Northern States. Never had the people of these States been so united in opposition, never so warm in their confidence in Mr. Calhoun Had their Union been dissolved, he would have been the first spirit in the South; and this he knew. But no one rejoiced more than he did, that the day of tranquility had returned. That the conflict was at an end, and the Union saved. In the most inclement season, he hurried to South Carolina, where resistance had assumed a most decided aspect, and, by his influence, induced the State to yield to peaceful interference. No man in the United States could have produced the result but Mr. Calhoun: and the anxiety

with which he pressed this Compromise, attests, beyond question, his love for the Union. Dissimulation has never found a place in Mr. Calhoun's heart. Had he desired a dissolution of the confederacy, he would have avowed the wish fearlessly, and without equivocation. But he believed that the dangers of a consolidation were upon us; and if, out of his intense study of a means to avert them, he came to conclusions, and pressed abstractions, the truth of which did not strike other men, it does not follow that he was not entirely honest in his belief of their efficacy and veracity.

Shall we probe further the wounds of this controversy? Shall we draw aside the pall covering the relics of a strife, at rest, we trust, for all future time? Shall we, like opposing fanatics, as was done in the case of William, the Norman, engage in repeated exhumations, in order to indulge in the ostentation of repeated funeral services? Who would be benefitted, who convinced? Let the storm rest! The winds are still! The surface of the sea is calm and undisturbed. The clouds are receding from the overhanging canopy, and men breathe freely. Out of the east, a new sun, the successor of that which yesterday declined in clouds, is beginning to rise, and pour its healthful rays over the land. Brethren of the same household are rejoicing in its splendor. May it warm and light them forever! May no dismal shadows intervene, and obscure its beams—but, full of luxuriance, may the land teem with life, all busy in the ark of peace, all faithful in devotion to the Union!

On the adjustment of the Tariff question, Mr. Calhoun gave himself, with great energy, to his labors as a Senator, in the more general measures in which the country was interested. Attached as he had been from principle to the party of General Jackson; desirable as it evidently was on the part of his friends to bring about a reconciliation, and to aid the administration with his talents and influence, he did no act, he said no word, indicating a desire to reconcile past differences, or to avail himself of support. He felt he had nothing to atone for, and, therefore, had none of the successes of compliance.

He displayed his independence of party ties prominently in the memorable debate on the Removal of the Deposites;—he condemned the dismissal of Mr. Duane, as an abuse of power; and, though he exposed such defects of a national banking system, he did not hesitate to deny the right of the Secretary to withhold the deposits, while the Bank performed its obligations faithfully. He predicted in a speech of extraordinary ability, various errors in the management of the currency. He denounced, with temperate but decided expression, the reception of the celebrated Protest of the President; and placed the powers of the several departments of the Government under the Constitution in a novel and satisfactory light. He raised by motion a Committee of Inquiry into the abuses of Executive patronage — the able report of which committee, prepared and submitted by himself, astounded the country as to the extent of that corrupt system; and produced a more powerful and just reaction against the administration than any effort of its avowed opponents. With a mind settled in its convictions as to the powers of a National Bank, and of State Banking institutions, as vehicles for the dispensing of the money patronage of the Government, he conceived and advocated the adopting the principle of that scheme, since carried into effect under the name of the Sub-Treasury. The Specie Circular next occupied his attention. He denied the authority of the President to issue the order on which it was based; but regarding the mischiefs of the step as beyond remedy, declined voting on the question of its revision.

It was at this juncture that the political

sky began to overcast with the approaching Abolition storm. The immediate fears on this subject was removed by the firmness of Mr. Calhoun, who, forseeing the danger of receiving petitions on this topic, which began to overload the tables of Congress, by his arguments and influence, procured the settlement of a precedent against their reception. On the question of the admission of Michigan, the danger spread again. Mr. Calhoun, was opposed to admitting a State on the authority of a mere informal meeting of the people inhabiting a territory. His views are presented in the following brief extract:—

"My opinion was, and still is, that the movement of the people of Michigan, in forming for themselves a State constitution, without waiting for the assent of Congress, was revolutionary, as it threw off the authority of the United States over the territory; and that we were left at liberty to treat the proceedings as revolutionary, and to remand her to her territorial condition, or to waive the irregularity, and to recognize what was done as rightfully done, as our authority was alone concerned.

"A territory cannot be admitted till she becomes a State; and in this I stand on the authority of the Constitution itself, which expressly limits the power of Congress to admit new states into the Union. But, if the Constitution had been silent, he would indeed be ignorant of the character of our political system, who did not see that states, sovereign and independent communities, and not territories, can only be admitted. Ours is *a union of states, a Federal* Republic. States, and not territories, form its component parts, bound together by a solemn league, in the form of a constitutional compact. In coming into the Union, the state pledges its faith to this sacred compact: an act which none but a sovereign and independent community is competent to perform; and, of course, a territory must first be raised to that condition before she can take her stand among the confederated states of our Union. How can a territory pledge its faith to the Constitution? It has no will of its own. You give it all its powers, and you can at pleasure overrule all her actions. If she enters as a territory, the act *is yours, not hers. Her consent is nothing without your authority and sanction.* Can you, can Congress become a party to the constitutional compact? How absurd."

This view of the subject was novel then —it is novel now. The question has been since raised on the admission of California, but the grounds on which Mr. Calhoun placed it, have been entirely overlooked.

Our limits will not permit us to follow Mr. Calhoun's brilliant career through the minor phases of his public life. We pass to two great and wonderful exhibitions of his mind and integrity. We leave out of view his able speeches on the McLoud matter; Mr. Crittenden's resolutions to permit the interference of executive officers in elections; the Veto power; the Bankrupt bill; and look to his services on the Oregon question. In this controversy Mr. Calhoun saw but the great interests of the nation, and the justice of her position. He became the great, the leading advocate of peace. He threw his influence into the scale at the very moment when that influence was most needed, and could be most powerfully felt. He performed an act which both God and man approved. He rose superior to the excitements of the occasion. He repelled from his breast the national feelings, which so frequently rule the judgment. He rejected the prejudices which grow up in the American heart against English power; and, in the act, anticipated the happiness of millions. Few can estimate the value of Mr. Calhoun's services in the adjustment of this international difficulty. Had Mr. Calhoun no other claim to the favor of his countrymen, that were enough to secure for his name immortality. We are disgusted with the idea of the crime and guilt which would have followed a war with Great Britain on the Oregon question; and in proportion to our detestation of an unjust war rises our respect for Mr. Calhoun's noble effort to avert it. We almost tremble when we survey the consequences which would have ensued. We blush to view the pretexts set up for a resort to arms. Is our nation —one boasting its foundation on principles

of pacification and good order, to go to war, only for success? Are human beings, proud of their residence in a land of liberty and laws, to contest as wild beasts, vaunting of their strength and struggling only for spoils? Is the commerce of all civilized countries to be wrecked, the peaceful fields of agriculture to be rendered desolate; are men to be butchered, and widows and orphans to be left mourning, merely to gratify the ambition of party leaders, and to minister to the vain externals of politics? Who—what advocate of that war ever promised himself, or his country, or the cause of humanity, a single advantage which it were not a crime to boast? Who, in seeing that chivalrous spirit who interposed his magnanimous efforts to remove all cause of difficulty, did not feel honor, truth, justice, were all vindicated in their own temple, and the cause of universal peace among men subserved?

It is scarcely necessary for us to say that there are many things in the course of Great Britain we do not approve. But, we also declare, there are some things we venerate and respect. Our memory dwells with pleasure on the fact, that we have sprung from her; that we have been taught the purity of our language, amidst the glorious remains of her literature, and to appreciate the beauties of art and philosophy in her splendid monuments of genius. We take delight in the recollection that we were instructed by her in our Religion and Laws, and in our first rudiments of civil freedom. That her Magna Charta extends its rays to our institutions, and that the blood of Russell and Sydney sprinkled the door-posts of our dwellings, and exempted us from political death. To us, with these emotions, the settlement of the cause of this last dispute brought the noblest reflections. And to the memory of him, who, more than any patriot and statesman, was the instrument, nay, the conqueror, of peace, we would give the best and highest rewards which a grateful country can bestow.

Scarcely had this affair been settled, before another cloud rose on the horizon. The long agitated question of interference with slavery in the District of Columbia, and the new territories, was opened to wide and intemperate debate. Ever jealous of the slightest invasion of the constitution—ever believing the South, in respect to this institution, in peril, Mr. Calhoun, in feeble health, hurried to his post.

It were fruitless to open the book of this controversy over Mr. Calhoun's bier. The South knows the wrong done her in regard to this topic; she knows the moral and political influences that crowd around the question; but the whole world knows her arguments of right, and her means of repelling attack. She will make no boast of her chivalry, and hesitate long to anticipate the judgment of posterity as to her patriotism. If these have not been attested in many well fought fields in the Revolutionary and late wars, she claims no privilege of being further heard. On the facts of her slave institutions she makes no explanation, and requires no apology. She will arbitrate mere differences of opinion with any power, but will yield no right in which the integrity of the Constitution and the principles of political liberty are at issue. For the protection of those, she places herself on the moral force of natural laws, and will never resort to physical means of defence, till all peaceful agencies are exhausted.

Will it be said — "This is Disunion?" Not so. Much as we revere the institutions of our State—far as we would commit ourselves for their preservation — we cannot doubt, we never have doubted, we never will doubt the virtue of loving the Union, and guarding its inviolability. It is true, as was said by Mr. Calhoun, declarations will not preserve it. But it is equally true that sentiments give direction to actions.

Though the greatest security of it will be found in the most faithful observance of the obligations of the Constitution; this fact does not forbid our contemplating with alarm the consequences of a dissolution. This great confederacy of States, considered irrespective of a centralizing power, which might be used as a means of destruction to the authority of the States severally, viewed in connection with the history of its origin, with the characters of the immortal men who originated and have sustained the Union,—certainly is beyond all value. No speculation can be indulged as to its worth to posterity and to us, in these respects; no standard of appreciation can be formed to designate its relative price. It is a sacred heir-loom of a family, having higher claims to respect than its age or its parents; its value consists in the memory of the ancestry which first achieved it; in the honorable recollections of the triumphs amidst which it was won and worn. Its worth is at once moral and traditionary. It is full of past glory, of present respect, of future hope. It is the title, the dignity, the birth-record of freedom; the evidence of all that is noble in the history of her noblest contests. Adorning and enriching the story of our country, it comes to us pregnant with proofs of struggles and successes which were national at first, are national now, and should be national to the last. How can this relic be divided? Who shall take Bunker Hill, Eutaw, Saratoga, or the Palmetto Fort in the partition of these glories? How, when we come to make up the list of the sacrifices and the victims of the Revolution, shall we divide them? Long be the period removed, when posterity shall throng about the resting places of the illustrious dead, and prepare to divide the sacred inheritance!

We approach the close of Mr. Calhoun's life. The human mind must necessarily pass through a trial, when in great calamity it is called to recognise the superior wisdom of God's judgment, and to practice resignation amidst its griefs. The vivid intellect was declining at a time of great danger to the principles he had so long defended, and which had so long filled his thoughts. On one occasion he said, he desired to be heard as one asking nothing for himself, but whose only wish was to see his country free, prosperous and happy. The same sentiment was on his lips when he died. The man who conquers the cruel terrors of death—who looks in the trying moment of dissolution, not on his own immortality on earth, but to the immortality of his country—who, anxious for her liberty, overcomes the shock of disease, the spectacle of a mourning wife and children—whose last words attest his devotion to the perpetuity of the Constitution, — is surely a Patriot. The confessions of one whose whole life we have distrusted, force themselves on the belief, when they come forth in the instant of dissolution. How much more solemn and impressive the admonitions of one whose long life, exhibiting the utmost purity of private character, and the firmest displays of patriotic self-denial, dying with a prayer for his country on his lips! Such was the life, such the death of Mr. Calhoun. On his cenotaph let that be written, to which his life was a martyr—Sincerity. Long in his native State—long in the history of his nation—will his memory illustrate the character of the true statesman, and furnish uncommon inducements to a life of virtue. The implacable hatred which pursued him—the secret envy that misrepresented him — are dead! A State, ever the rewarder of faithful services in the cause of public virtue, mourning her eldest son; a nation, lamenting the extinguishment of an intellect long enlightening her progress, stand about his grave, and record the uncontestable triumph of The Honest Man.

Few men can withstand the influence of that love of public approbation, which, for wise purposes, is planted in the human breast, Few have the firmness to reject honors for the sake of virtue;—few, in the moment of popular *favor*, can put back the rewards offered ;—few can display, amidst temptation, the immutability of conscience. Lord Camden, in English history; Mr. Calhoun in American, are conspicuous examples of these unusual gifts. Alike they were intellectual, alike unchangeably incorruptible. Always important to parties, always unaffected by their corruptions, they were alike victims to whatever was just. For them office had no allurement, and political power no terror. They declared belief of right as frankly as they denounced wrong ; and, as was said by St. Jerome of religion, if in error, it was a glorious privilege to be deceived with such guides.

" Quicquid ex Agricolâ amavimus, quicquid mirati sumus, manet mansurumque est in animis hominum, in æternitate temporum, famâ rerum." VIT. AGRIC.

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